



October 16, 1997

David Werdegar, M.D., M.P.H.
OSHDP
Health Policy and Planning Division
1600 9th Street, Room 350
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California Hospital Outcomes Project

Dear Dr. Werdegar:

Mercy Healthcare Sacramento (MHS) is committed to ongoing clinical quality improvement. We support the analytic approach undertaken by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHDP). The California Outcomes Project provides a unique opportunity to evaluate our performance in relationship to hospitals across the state. In addition, MHS is asking its respective medical staffs to review the information provided.

We call the reader's attention to certain issues to be addressed by the research team:

1. The data released in this report reflects patient care rendered from 1991 - 1993. Due to the age of this data, its uses are significantly limited.
2. The presentation of the two models (Model A and Model B) is confusing. We recommend the OSHDP select only one model for future reporting.
3. We continue to support OSHDP's decision not to report ranks for hospitals. The wide confidence intervals associated with the estimates of risk-adjusted outcomes lead to similarly wide confidence intervals associated with the corresponding ranks. As a consequence of these wide confidence intervals, we believe that the hospital ranks are too uncertain to validly order hospitals.
4. The format of the data returned to the facilities needs improvement. We recommend that OSHDP provide the patient medical record number in the report, rather than identifying patients by social security number alone.

□ **American River Campus**
4747 Engle Road
Carmichael, CA 95608
Phone 916/484-2222

□ **San Juan Campus**
6501 Coyle Avenue
Carmichael, CA 95608
Phone 916/537-5000

□ **Surgery Center**
6660 Coyle Avenue
Carmichael, CA 95608
Phone 916/965-1936

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5. As indicated in the report, the Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) status of patients is not a risk factor which was available for this reporting period (1991-1993). We believe that this information may have significantly altered the report's outcomes for hospitals which treat a high percentage of DNR patients.

Thank you for allowing us to respond.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Boldi
Vice-President/
Chief Operating Officer



Richard Nybakken, M.D.
Chief of Medical Staff